

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 08340 281356Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03  
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 AID-05  
IGA-02 EB-07 TRSE-00 MCT-01 /082 W  
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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6721

UNCLAS JIDDA 8340

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PFOR, SA  
SUBJ: LOCAL PRESS EDITORIAL ON ARAB-ISRAEL

1. THE FOLLOWING EDITORIAL APPEARED IN THE ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER ARAB NEWS DECEMBER 27, 1976.

2. BEGIN TEXT: "ISRAELI SMOKESCREEN". OFFICIALS OF THE  
LAME-DUCK FORD ADMINISTRATION REVEALED LAST WEEK THAT THE  
OUTGOING US PRESIDENT HAD DECIDED TO PROPOSE A \$1.5 BILLION  
AID PACKAGE FOR ISRAEL IN THE COMING FISCAL YEAR. THE FORD  
PROPOSAL IS \$500 MILLION LESS THAN THE ISRAELIS HAVE REQUESTED  
AND \$300 MILLION LESS THAN THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS RECOMMENDED.  
ISRAELI AMBASSADOR SIMCHA DINITZ LODGED A PROTEST WITH SEC-  
RETARY OF STATE HENRY KISSINGER, WHO PROMISED TO REVIEW THE  
DECISION, BUT POLITICAL OBSERVERS IN WASHINGTON FEEL THE  
ADMINISTRATION IS UNLIKELY TO CHANGE ITS MIND. MR FORD,  
APPARENTLY WEARY OF PLAYING POLITICS OVER APPROPRIATIONS FOR  
THE JEWISH STATE, HAS DECIDED TO GIVE ISRAEL A PARTING SLAP  
ON THE HAND BEFORE HE LEAVES OFFICE.  
AS A RESULT, WHEN PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER TAKES

OFFICE JANUARY 20, HE IS GOING TO BE FACED WITH AN INTER-  
ESTING DILEMMA. IF MR CARTER BOWS TO ASGATAGE#IN THE MIDDLE  
EAST PEACE NEGOTIATION PROCESS. MR CARTER'S PUBLICLY  
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PAGE 02 JIDDA 08340 281356Z

ANNOUNCED GRATITUDE FOR SAUDI ARABIA'S STAND AT THE RECENT  
OPEC CONFERENCE IN DOHA IS A SIGN THAT HE COMPREHENDS THE  
MAMMOTH ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ISSUES CURRENTLY AT STAKE IN  
THE MIDDLE EAST. WE HOPE THAT THE NEW PRESIDENT WILL NOT  
SACRIFICE AMERICA'S GROWING TIES WITH SAUDI ARABIA AND THE  
OTHER ARAB STATES FOR THE SAKE OF A FEW CHEERS FROM THE ISRAELI LOBBY

ISRAEL WILL DOUBTLESS TRY TO CONVINCE MR CARTER THAT THE EXTRA AID IS NEEDED TO STABILIZE ISRAEL'S FOUNDERING ECONOMY AND ASSURE POLITICAL CONTINUITY DURING THE UPCOMING GENERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN. IF MR CARTER IS AS SHARP AS WE SUSPECT HE IS, HE WILL REALIZE THAT THIS ARGUMENT IS LARGELY BLUFF. THE FORD ADMINISTRATION AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT BOTH AGREE THAT ISRAEL CAN GET ALONG QUITE WELL ON SUBSTANTIALLY LESS THAN THEY'RE SEEKING. THE PROBLEMS ENDEMIC IN ISRAEL'S ECONOMY CANNOT BE SOLVED BY ANNUAL AMERICAN HANDOUTS. NOR WILL DOLLARS RESOLVE THE LONGSTANDING DIVISIONS IN THAT COUNTRY'S BODY POLITIC. ISRAEL'S COMPLAINTS AMOUNT TO LITTLE MORE THAN A SMOKE SCREEN. IT IS UP TO MR CARTER TO CLEAR THE AIR.

PORTER

NOTE BY OC/T: #AS RECEIVED.

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